



DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Rural Utilities Service

[Docket No. RUS-22-TELECOM-0045]

60-Day Notice of Proposed Information Collection: Distance Learning and Telemedicine

Loan and Grant Program; OMB Control No.: 0572-0096

AGENCY: Rural Utilities Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice; request for comments.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Utilities Service announces its' intention to request an extension of a currently approved information collection and invites comments on this information collection.

DATES: Comments on this notice must be received by [INSERT DATE 60 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER] to be assured of consideration.

ADDRESSES: Comments may be submitted electronically by the Federal eRulemaking Portal: Go to <https://www.regulations.gov> and, in the "Search Field" box, labeled "Search for Rules, Proposed Rules, Notices or Supporting Documents," enter the following docket number: (**RUS-22-TELECOM-0045**). To submit or view public comments, click the "Search" button, select the "Documents" tab, then select the following document title: (60-Day Notice of Proposed Information Collection: Distance Learning and Telemedicine Grants Program; OMB Control No.: 0572-0096) from the "Search Results" and select the "Comment" button. Before inputting your comments, you may also review the "Commenter's Checklist" (optional). Insert your comments under the "Comment" title, click "Browse" to attach files (if available). Input your email address and select "Submit Comment."

Information on using Regulations.gov, including instructions for accessing documents, submitting comments, and viewing the docket after the close of the comment period, is available through the site's "FAQ" link.

Other Information: Additional information about Rural Development and its programs is available on the Internet at <https://www.rd.usda.gov>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Robin M. Jones, Management Analyst, Rural Development Innovation Center – Regulations Management Division, United States Department of Agriculture, 1400 Independence Avenue SW, South Building, Washington, DC 20250-1522. Telephone: (202) 772-1172. Email: robin.m.jones@usda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

The Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) regulation implementing provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 requires that interested members of the public and affected agencies have an opportunity to comment on information collection and recordkeeping activities. This notice identifies the following information collection that Rural Utilities Service is submitting to OMB as extension to an existing collection with Agency adjustment.

Title: Distance Learning and Telemedicine Grant Program.

OMB Control Number: 0572-0096.

Expiration Date of Approval: November 30, 2022.

Type of Request: Extension of a currently approved information collection.

Estimate of Burden: Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 2.45 hours per response.

Respondents: Business or other for profit, not-for-profit institutions, and State.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 300.

Estimated Number of Responses per Respondent: 1.

Estimated Number of Responses: 6,840

Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents: 17,814 hours.

Abstract: The Rural Utilities Service's (RUS) Distance Learning and Telemedicine (DLT) Loan and Grant program provides loans and grants for advanced telecommunications services to improve rural areas' access to educational and medical services. The various forms and narrative statements required are collected from the applicants (rural community facilities, such as schools, libraries, hospitals, and medical facilities, for example). The purpose of collecting the information is to determine such factors as eligibility of the applicant; the specific nature of the proposed project; the purposes for which loan and grant funds will be used; project financial and technical feasibility; and, compliance with applicable laws and regulations. In addition, for grants funded pursuant to the competitive evaluation process, information collected facilitates RUS' selection of those applications most consistent with DLT goals and objectives in accordance with the authorizing legislation and implementing regulation.

Comments are invited on:

- (a) Whether the collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information will have practical utility;
- (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the collection of information including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used;
- (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and
- (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including through the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Copies of this information collection can be obtained from Robin M. Jones, Rural Development Innovation Center – Regulations Management Division, at (202) 772-1172. Email: robin.m.jones@usda.gov.

All responses to this notice will be summarized and included in the request for OMB approval. All comments will also become a matter of public record.

Christopher A. McLean,
Acting Administrator,
Rural Utilities Service.

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